

# Destination Greater Victoria 2021 Business Plan



DESTINATION GREATER  
**VICTORIA**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Destination Greater Victoria's 2021 Business Plan has been developed in the context of the most serious disruption our industry has ever experienced. Despite some success generating limited revenues in the summer and fall of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has created significant negative impacts on the Greater Victoria visitor economy. Beyond the revenue and jobs lost, our communities have also lost the vibrancy that the visitor economy generates and supports.

As I write this message near the end of 2020, British Columbia - like much of the Northern Hemisphere - is in a serious second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Destination Greater Victoria pivoted in 2020 to a leaner, more sustainable business model to guide us through recovery. Destination Greater Victoria has also worked hard to support its members through the Greater Victoria Tourism Rescue and Recovery Task Force. We know that more advocacy will be required in 2021 to ensure the voices of our industry are heard.

Despite the very challenging times, we know that our industry makes a significant contribution to the economy, and contributes to the exchange of cultures, learning and the social fabric of our communities. The promise of tourism is sustainable and regenerative, focused on sharing and exchanges, as well as driving place-based regenerative economies. We also know that Greater Victoria has a strong brand, including top rankings in global publications, and a meetings business that will rebound in future years. However, the Greater Victoria visitor economy still faces an emergency. Guided by this Business Plan, 2021 will be critical as a bridge to recovery.

Within this context and in collaboration with our partners, the 2021 Business Plan sets out the best path forward. We need to be nimble and flexible as public health recommendations and orders change. No one fully understands what 2021 will have in store, but we have set a plan, a budget and business targets predicated on the best information available. Our teams are focused and our partners understand our plan for the year. However, this plan will be adjusted as the year progresses and circumstances change.

In previous years, Destination Greater Victoria has been financially prudent and built a restricted reserve. Due to organizational decisions designed to reduce expenses Destination Greater Victoria has not drawn on this restricted reserve. This financial prudence provides a foundation as we move forward on our 2022-2026 Five-Year Strategic Plan and Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) renewal. When the strategic plan and MRDT renewal are complete, and restrictions are lifted on travel, our sole focus will be on recovery.

As CEO of Destination Greater Victoria, I am very grateful for the input we have received on the 2021 Business Plan. I am particularly grateful to our five advisory committees. They are very engaged and active. This is perhaps the most challenging time ever faced by our members and community partners. The Destination Greater Victoria team is dedicated to work as hard as it can to serve our community and to lead Greater Victoria out of this challenging economic situation.

It is our distinct pleasure to serve our members and community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Nursey". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Paul Nursey  
CEO, Destination Greater Victoria

# DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA 2021 BUSINESS PLAN

2021 is a critical year. The Greater Victoria visitor economy needs to recover from the significant negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Destination Greater Victoria members have faced significant challenges in 2020 and have accessed government programs to help their businesses through the economic downturn. As the economy reopens, it is vital that revenues return before these government supports diminish or are discontinued. The 2021 Business Plan will provide a firm foundation and a framework to accelerate this recovery.

## DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA 2022-2026 ROLLING STRATEGIC PLAN

Destination Greater Victoria's 2017-2021 Rolling Strategic Plan expires at the end of 2021. As part of its Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) renewal with the Province, Destination Greater Victoria is required to complete its 2022-2026 Rolling Strategic Plan. This document will cover the next five years and positions the Greater Victoria visitor economy to focus on specific objectives, plan deliberately, and create a more sustainable and inclusive era for travel, tourism and our community.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant negative impacts on the visitor economy – both in Greater Victoria and other destinations. Many articles and reports have been compiled and many visitor economy leaders are discussing how the travel industry will transform or evolve from the COVID-19 pandemic. It will likely take years for the visitor economy to recover. Most experts suggest it will be 2024 or 2025 before the visitor economy recovers to pre-COVID-19 levels of activity.<sup>1</sup> However, it is also clear there is considerable pent-up demand for travel and the visitor economy will recover. Most experts foresee a gradual reduction in COVID-19 travel-related health measures during the first six months of 2021, commensurate with advances in medical innovations and vaccines. If this occurs, there will be an accelerated framework for recovery in the second half of 2021.

The October 22, 2020 announcement of a pilot project in Alberta for rapid testing to replace the need for quarantine periods is a positive development. Most CEOs of major travel companies suggest June or July 2021 as a logical target date for the reopening of international travel.<sup>2</sup> However, this outlook does not apply to cruise business, which could be among the last travel segments to reopen in North America in a meaningful manner.<sup>3</sup>

In crafting Destination Greater Victoria's 2021 Business Plan, it is also important to recognize that we work with members as well as community and government partners to realize robust visitor economy recovery. This is a thoughtful plan and pathway to full reopening. Destination Greater Victoria will work through the challenges and opportunities presented in 2021 and focus on key objectives as Greater Victoria's visitor economy recovers. As is the case for our member businesses, Destination Greater Victoria is working in a period of scarcer resources and it is vital to invest when it will make a meaningful difference.

### DESTINATION GREATER VICTORIA 2021 BUSINESS PLAN: A DELIBERATE PLAN FOR AN UNCERTAIN YEAR

The purpose of the 2021 Business Plan is to chart a realistic pathway to profitability and sustainability as quickly as possible. The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the Greater Victoria visitor economy. Greater Victoria has many natural assets, experiences and human enterprises that provide a foundation to rebuild and compete. The goal is to be a stronger, more resilient industry that contributes to society. While there is an opportunity to “build back better”,

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Oxford Economics Tourism Economics Division Scenarios presented to Destination Canada's “Northstar 22” planning meetings in September 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Skift Global Forum. September 2020

<sup>3</sup> MMGY Global: Summit at Vale Virtual Global Planning Conference.

in the short-term Destination Greater Victoria's focus is supporting members facing challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

AA key short- to medium-term priority is for businesses to return to profitability without government supports. The visitor economy has benefited from several government programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Destination Greater Victoria will focus efforts to ensure as many visitor economy businesses as possible survive the COVID-19 pandemic, reemerging in a coherent manner with a robust and high-functioning tourism ecosystem.

The Greater Victoria visitor economy needs to continue to incorporate values of sustainability and inclusivity. These are core in the community we serve. Greater Victoria's residents have clearly communicated the need to focus on creating a year-round industry. The road to recovery will be a multi-year process, but it is vital that the visitor economy also supports the economic, environmental and cultural health of the community moving forward.

We all recognize that the road to recovery will be a process over several years, but if we start with the best possible 2021, recovery will be quicker and more inclusive.

## GRATEFUL FOR COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

The visitor economy is partnership-oriented, working to leverage resources and achieve the best mutual outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened a sense of this partnership. Most leaders adhere to the principle that the visitor economy serves communities as well as industry stakeholders. Destination Greater Victoria is grateful to its government partners and other organizations in Greater Victoria, as well as provincially and across the country.

Destination Greater Victoria is also grateful for the ongoing partnership of the Victoria Hotel Destination Marketing Association, which voluntarily levies an additional 1% Destination Marketing Fee (DMF) for the purposes of marketing and sales initiatives. The DMF is used to drive hotel stays and improve the competitiveness of the destination.

Importantly, Destination Greater Victoria recognizes the vital role of advocacy partners during the COVID-19 pandemic. These range from local chambers of commerce to hotels, transportation providers and other related organizations that work tirelessly to advance the need for initiatives and logical public policies that support the visitor economy through crisis and to recovery.

Destination Greater Victoria is also grateful for the time, energy and commitment of the Greater Victoria Tourism Rescue & Recovery Task Force (Task Force). The Task Force was created by industry but has management support from Destination Greater Victoria in its rescue and recovery efforts.

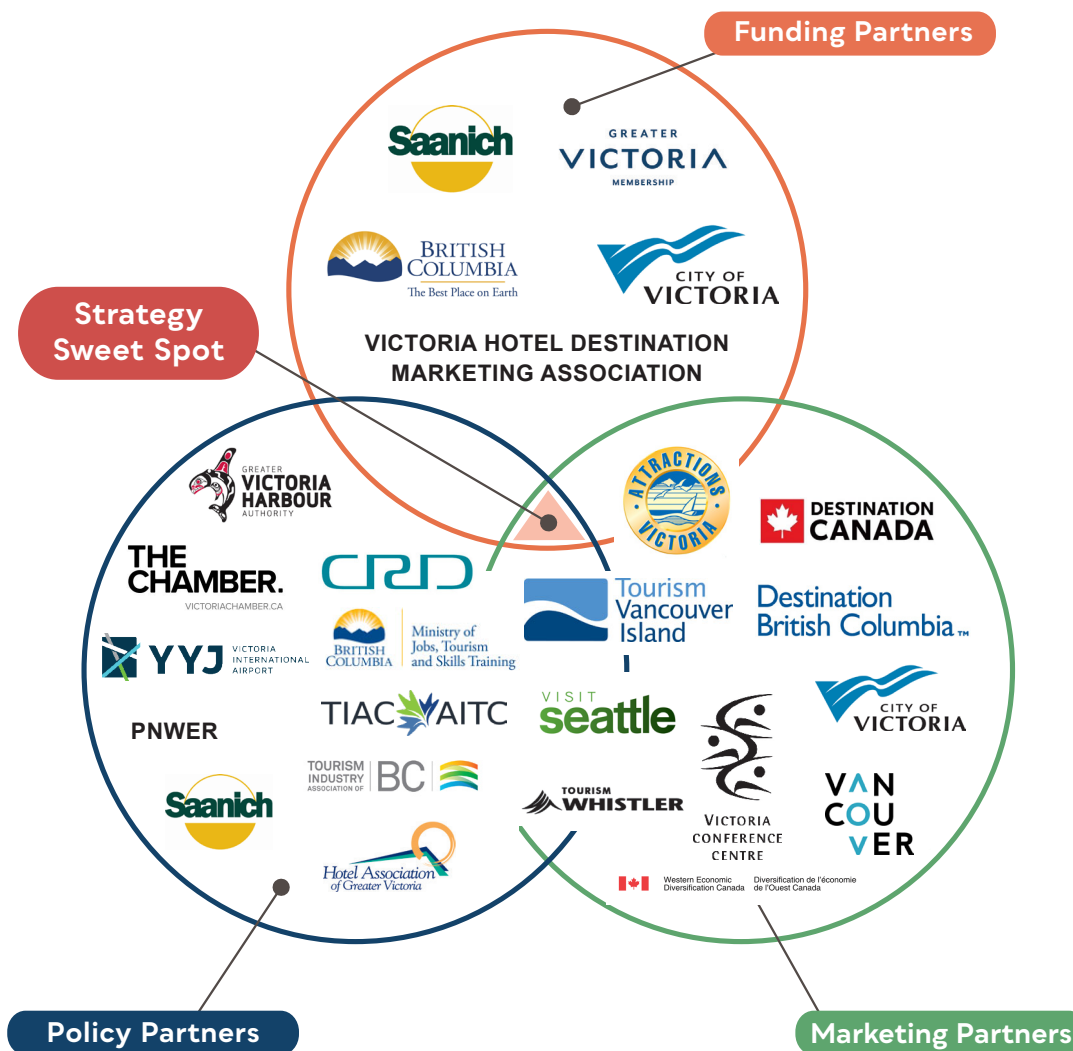
## GRATEFUL FOR ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPORT, REVENUE AND RESOURCES

Traditional sources of revenue such as MRDT and membership fees have been challenged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Destination Greater Victoria is grateful it secured significant, non-traditional relief and replacement revenues. Through 2020 Destination Greater Victoria has been able to leverage these non-traditional sources and ensure it can serve its members and community. In particular, Destination Greater Victoria would like to highlight:

- Emergency support from the Province of British Columbia: In May 2020 the Province of British Columbia announced \$10 million in one-time support for British Columbia community destination marketing organizations (CDMOs) that were adversely affected by PST/MRDT payment deferrals. These resources were vital in stabilizing Destination Greater Victoria and providing certainty of a financial pathway forward.
- City of Victoria: The City of Victoria has provided generous lease relief at the 812 Wharf Street Visitor Centre.
- HRT International Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA): Destination Greater Victoria is grateful for the support from our landlord HRT International for allowing Destination Greater Victoria to participate in the CECRA program.
- Destination British Columbia Co-op Program: Destination British Columbia relaxed its contributions requirements for co-op marketing programs, allowing Destination Greater Victoria to further expand the reach of its marketing campaign focused on regional agritourism and culinary options in the fall 2020 and spring 2021. Destination

British Columbia also provided a \$1,000 grant for visitor centres, which Destination Greater Victoria used for plexiglass barriers.

- Destination Canada: Destination Canada generously reprofiled \$30 million designated for international marketing towards domestic, provincial and major city destination marketing. Destination Greater Victoria's share of the reprofiled funding was \$504,000 spread over 2020 and 2021.
- Western Economic Diversification Canada: Western Economic Diversification Canada has demonstrated significant flexibility in its partnership ratio for the previously announced agritourism initiative. This meant significant marketing communications efforts were sustained through the fall of 2020 and will continue into spring 2021 when the program ends.
- Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS): Like many affected employers, Destination Greater Victoria benefited from the CEWS in 2020 and will likely benefit in 2021 as well. This has allowed Destination Greater Victoria to retain staff and capacity during the economic downturn and will facilitate the start of a right-sized recovery.



# BUSINESS CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

## A. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES FOR 2021

### 1. Stimulate Revenue so that Visitor Economy Businesses Can Survive and Recover:

- Through focused sales and marketing, support member-businesses with goal of having as many businesses as possible survive.
- Move into sustainable economic recovery as government aids taper.
- Leverage the high desirability and perceived healthy reputation of Greater Victoria.
- Create the conditions for compression and year-round business again.
- Fine tune Greater Victoria's brand strategy to ensure it is the most relevant it can be emerging from COVID-19 pandemic.

### 2. Advocate for Industry and Rebuild Trust in Travel with Customers and Residents:

- Ensure governments at all levels understand the benefits of a recovering visitor economy.
- Continue to advocate with partners for targeted rescue and relief measures until medical innovation allows the visitor economy to operate again without constraint.
- Work in collaboration with key partners to ensure a smooth re-opening in order to be competitive with other jurisdictions.

### 3. Continue Destination Greater Victoria and its Member-Businesses' Journey Towards Sustainability and Inclusivity:

- The new Destination Greater Victoria Sustainability Advisory Committee is working constructively on capturing the existing work done on sustainability. The Committee will lead sustainability initiatives moving forward.
- Researching world-leading sustainability and inclusivity frameworks for destinations. Recommendations are expected to come from this research.
- Destination Greater Victoria will work to be a more inclusive workplace and contribute to a positive, inclusive community.

### 4. Continue to Focus on Organizational Culture and Well-Being:

- Despite staffing reductions due to decreased revenues, work to be a positive employer.
- Continue to focus on delivering results for members, but also realize recovery will be a medium-term process.
- Recognize the stress this pandemic has created for Destination Greater Victoria's employees. Work deliberately to put supports in place.
- In the short term, find innovative and affordable ways to encourage learning, support and well-being.

## B. FINANCIAL PLANNING, BUDGETING AND "GATES" OVERLAID WITH BUSINESS PRIORITIES

Within the context of business objectives, Destination Greater Victoria is working in a highly uncertain financial environment. To frame what is possible in an era of extreme uncertainty we have built logical gates, along with impacts and inputs, into our budgeting and planning process. There needs to be acceptance that the budgetary timeline is not within the organization's control and this plan may be constrained by external factors. It is also possible that more ambitious targets may be possible if recovery is quicker than anticipated. Destination Greater Victoria does not know when these "gates" will be achieved. Hence the need to be both ambitious and patient. The Destination Greater Victoria 2021 Business Plan contains a conservative budget but there will be re-forecasts on an ongoing basis throughout 2021.

As we see the landscape now in terms of gates, milestones and financial constraints and opportunities:

#### **Q4 2020 (sets up runway for 2021 e.g. cashflow)**

- CEWS extension details clarified.
- Commercial rent assistance clarified.
- Weathering consequences of a second or third wave of cases.
- Rapid testing roll outs at airports and other ports-of-entry, first as pilot projects then in a more widespread manner.
- Phase 3 vaccine testing provides impetus to shift conversations towards a logical reopening.

#### **Q1 2021 (a critical period to assess how quickly and efficiently recovery will occur)**

- Timely MRDT renewal with City of Victoria application complete by February 2021. This is ahead of the June 2021 deadline and allows flexibility to deploy the Board-managed Restricted Reserve for recovery. A renewed mandate provides five years to rebuild reserves.
- Therapeutics or vaccines start to be distributed.
- Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) or additional Destination Canada resources clarified.

#### **Q2/Q3 (more sustained re-opening of business)**

- US Border opens.
- International travel restrictions start to ease.
- Restrictions on meetings and sports tourism events relaxed or lifted.

#### **Q4 2021 (ongoing resumption of business)**

- Possible first resumption of trade shows and other in person B2B activities in preparation for 2022.
- Possible first in-market sales calls or missions with partners depending on conditions at that time.

## **C. KEY TACTICS: WHAT WE PLAN TO DO – KEY TACTICS AND PROJECTS TO SUPPORT THE BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES**

### **Objective 1: Stimulate Revenue so the Businesses Can Survive and Recover:**

- Strong regional marketing program to stimulate spring and summer leisure travel.
- A deliberate plan to welcome back guests from crucial short-haul markets in the US when the border opens. Be prepared with significant resources in reserve to deploy at the appropriate time.
- Assess needs for fall/winter 2021 promotion. Analyze part way through the year against pent-up demand we might see at that time.
- Leverage earned media and influencers to tell the story of Greater Victoria in order to create demand.
- Business Events Victoria (BEV) will rebook meetings and grow confirmed business in future years, as well as create the conditions for compression and profitability as soon as possible. BEV will burnish Greater Victoria's reputation as a strong meetings destination and salvage as much as possible for Q3 and Q4 2021, as well as continue to build new business in 2022 and beyond.
- Execute the BC 55+ Games in September 2021 as an important recovery tactic. Continue to bid on and win future sports tourism events, which will contribute to ongoing business and vitality along with bolstering Greater Victoria's reputation as a sports tourism community.
- Work with travel trade intermediaries in logical geographic priority segments. The goal is to position Greater Victoria product in the wholesale market and ensure there is competitive shelf space. This will start with Canadian travel agencies/consortia's in the beginning of 2021 and expand as restrictions are eased.



- Ongoing efforts to build the reputation of Greater Victoria as a safe travel destination and rebuild trust during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Continue to nurture and refine Greater Victoria’s visitor economy brand during this process.

**Objective 2: Advocate for Industry and Rebuild Trust in Travel with Costumers and Residents:**

- Rebuild trust among residents towards tourists. We need to re-establish Greater Victoria’s reputation as a welcoming city and region.
- Ongoing tourism-specific advocacy (with tourism-specific knowledge) on behalf of members for relief and recovery support.
- Protect Destination Greater Victoria’s future by securing MRDT renewal with the City of Victoria and look to renew the relationship with the District of Saanich.
- Ensure visitors have the best experience possible, and that members are represented equitability and have a strong chance of success.

**Objective 3: Continue Organizational and Industry Journey Towards Sustainability and Inclusivity:**

- Destination Greater Victoria’s Sustainability Advisory Committee is at work collating the efforts of the industry. In 2021 it will research and recommend a global accreditation program for Destination Greater Victoria and its members.
- Continue the IMPACT Travel and Tourism Sustainability conference in 2021 as a virtual conference, with the goal to return in 2022 as a full conference. The IMPACT Travel and Tourism Sustainability Conference has become a critical place of learning and applying practical solutions.
- Maintain Destination Greater Victoria’s previously stated goal to be Canada’s first major certified carbon neutral destination organization by 2021.
- Despite financial challenges, maintain Destination Greater Victoria’s valued partnership with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) and continue to be a long-term sponsor of the ITAC Global Conference.
- Stay engaged with the Songhees Nation as it rolls out its “Explore Songhees” strategy and plan.
- Be active partners and contributors to Destination International’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee, including committing through the CEO’s pledge to be allies and supporters for diversity and inclusion in destination organizations.
- As soon as resources allow, conduct a full external review of the organization from an expert consultation through a diversity and inclusion lens.

**Objective 4: Continue to Focus on Organizational Culture and Well Being:**

- Destination Greater Victoria staff, like the rest of the visitor economy, have been working in a period of extreme uncertainty with reduced compensation and higher expectations.
- Recognize that the pandemic has lasted longer than anticipated and the cumulative consequences of stress can be damaging if not mitigated.
- Continue to be focused on delivering results for our members, but also realize and be patient that recovery will be a medium-term process.
- Recognize the mental toll this pandemic has taken, including on Destination Greater Victoria’s employees. Work deliberately to put supports in place.
- Continue open and transparent communication within the team.
- When conditions allow, work to re-establish pre-COVID-19 compensation frameworks, recognizing that fewer employees are contributing more work.

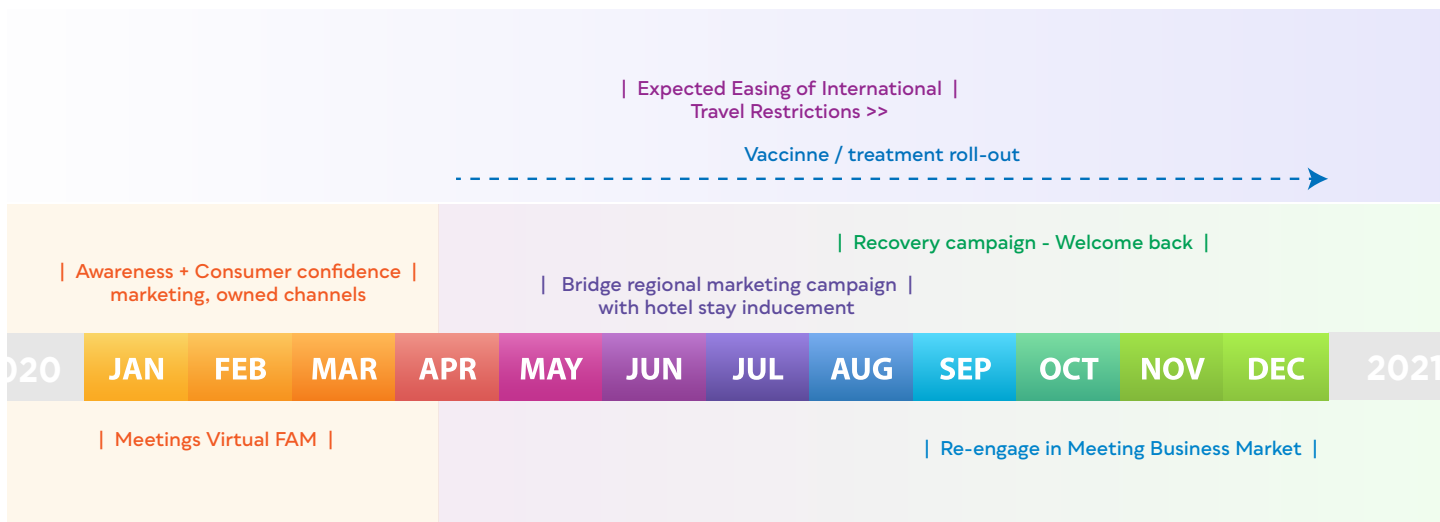
## D. IMPORTANT PROJECTS FOR 2021

- 2022-2026 MRDT Renewal Process:** Work is underway on Destination Greater Victoria’s mandatory five-year renewal process. The renewal documents must be submitted to Destination British Columbia by June 30, 2021. It is the organization’s goal to finalize and submit the renewal program by early February 2021 to ensure ample time to prepare for a multi-year recovery with a clear mandate.
- Diversity and Inclusion Audit:** As referenced in Objective 3 as soon as resources become available Destination Greater Victoria will engage an expert consultant to review Destination Greater Victoria’s entire value chain.
- Building and Maintaining a Positive Visitor Resident Interface:** Destination Greater Victoria, as part of delivering on its 2021 plan and in preparation for its new 2022-2026 five-year strategy, will engage in a process to ensure the visitor economy is benefitting and supporting the community, and will continue to build ongoing communications and outreach.
- Experiences Strategy:** In discussion with stakeholders in the experiences and attractions community, pursue the idea of an “experiences strategy” that focuses on curating experiences in order to maximize investment, increases length of stay, optimizes opportunities across days of the week and times of day for businesses as well as communities, particularly during times where peak visitation is still highly valued. In lockstep with a process of reviewing our agency partner we plan to advance this strategy in 2021 and then accelerate it in line with recovery.
- Agritourism Project:** As previously mentioned, Destination Greater Victoria has received significant resources through Western Economic Diversification Canada. The project will end with a final marketing investment in the first three months of 2021. This helps stimulate regional travel during a period where it is expected travel restrictions will be in place.

## E. SETTING TARGETS AND RECOVERY MILESTONES

- Most experts are predicting it will take until 2024 to return to 2019 business levels (not adjusted for inflation).
- The Greater Victoria visitor economy in 2018 was slightly stronger than 2019, so 2018 business activity should be the goal in Greater Victoria (e.g. 39 citywide conferences). We should not lose track of what we have already demonstrated can be achieved when conditions and resources realistically allow.

### 2021 POTENTIAL TIMELINE AND MILESTONES



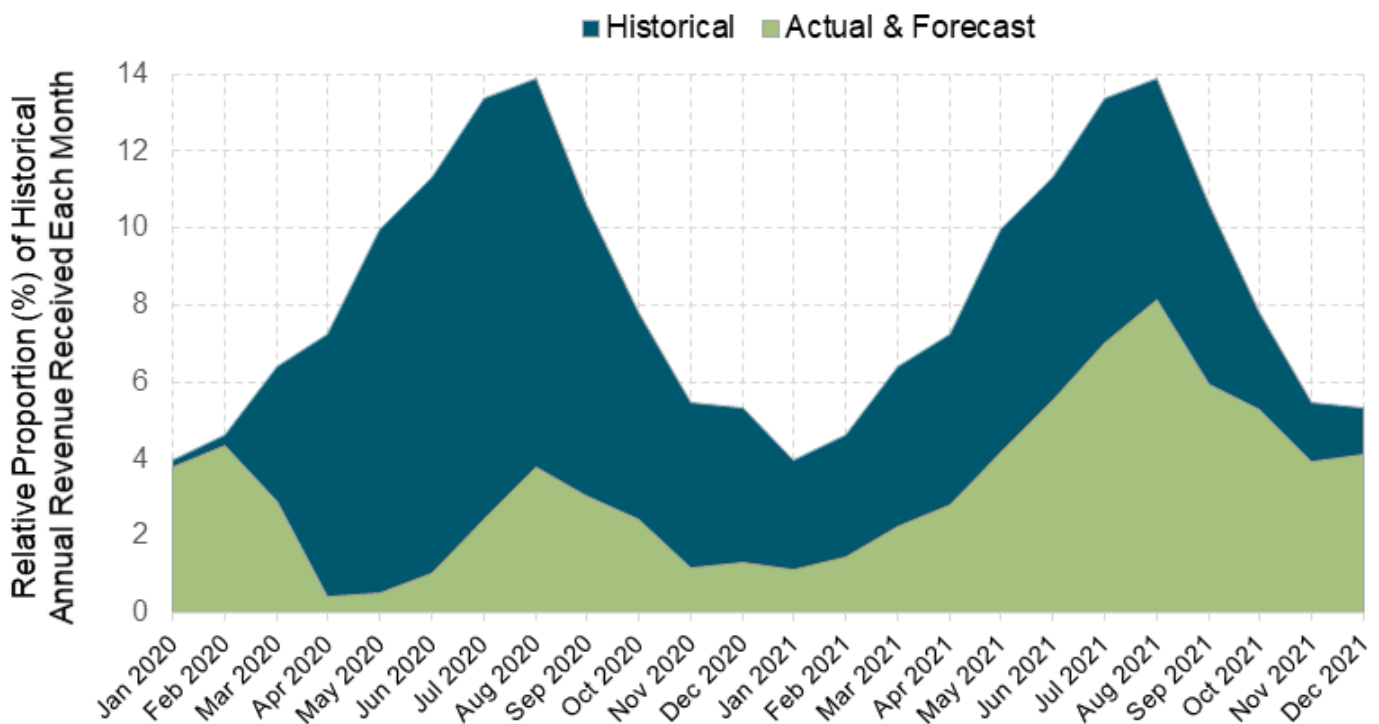
## F. BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

- **Forecasting:** Destination Greater Victoria’s 2021 Business Plan is built on assumptions and logical financial gates. There could be events beyond the control of the organization. The pace of recovery is unknown and therefore the plan must scale accordingly. Timely and ongoing forecasting will be a critical success factor.
- **Liquidity:** Despite supports and a markedly clearer pathway forward, Destination Greater Victoria is not entirely free of liquidity concerns, particularly in Q1 2021. As such the focus must be on keeping the organization healthy.
- **Human Capacity:** Destination Greater Victoria aims to accomplish this plan with significantly reduced capacity. However, the plan is achievable and right-sized.

## PROJECTED REVENUE FLOW FOR 2020 & 2021 – COMMERCIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

UPDATED NOVEMBER 2020

The figure below shows historical revenue flow across months of the year for commercial accommodations in Greater Victoria (dark green) compared to actual revenue flow to November 2020 and projections for 2021 (light green). Variation between the two shaded areas indicate the severe loss of revenue sustained by commercial accommodations since commencement of the COVID pandemic. Revenue flows are unlikely to approach historical levels until well into 2022, which will impact Greater Victoria’s visitor economy significantly.



# BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

## CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

### STRATEGY

Destination Greater Victoria's strategy for corporate communications is to develop and execute on key areas of public messaging and stakeholder relations that align with the organization's strategic direction. Activities are informed by Destination Greater Victoria's strategic planning and considerations specific to the issues or goal of public commentary. Corporate communications occur through local media as well as social media to highlight the positive contribution of tourism in the Greater Victoria economy and to show support for Destination Greater Victoria members. The overriding focus is telling tourism's story. The aim of destination management is to promote Greater Victoria's visitor economy as beneficial to the wider community along with a healthy resident-visitor interface. Destination Greater Victoria operates in areas of public scrutiny and must continually demonstrate to local policymakers, stakeholders and the public at large that it is adding value in its work to market the destination.

Key activities and tactics for 2021 include:

- Ongoing tourism advocacy on behalf of DGV's members for support through COVID-19 recovery.
- Ongoing work to build and promote the reputation of Greater Victoria as a safe and welcoming travel destination.
- Continuing to tell tourism's story, highlighting tourism's value and many contributions to the local economy, jobs, tax revenues, residents and communities.
- Promoting the work and achievements of Destination Greater Victoria and member businesses towards being sustainable and inclusive.

# BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

## CONSUMER MARKETING AND TRAVEL MEDIA

### STRATEGY

In the face of COVID-19, we will continue our ongoing refocusing and re-evaluation of market analysis and marketing projections while continuing to drive incremental yield to the region with a focus on measurable room night increases and delivering value to our stakeholders.

Collectively, the Marketing and Communications team will focus on six strategic priorities:

- Promote Greater Victoria as a compelling, year-round destination
- Increase length-of-stay to boost destination revenues
- Drive strong call-to-action (CTA) and promote measurable conversion
- Leverage partnerships and co-investment opportunities with Destination BC, Destination Canada and other entities that align with Destination Greater Victoria's objectives
- When meetings and events are permitted, be ready to drive measurable visitation to Destination Greater Victoria-owned conferences and events
- Enhance the promotion of the Greater Victoria area to drive regional disbursement as applicable.

## MARKETING BUSINESS TO CONSUMER (B2C): ADVERTISING, B2C PROMOTION ACTIVITY AND CONTENT MARKETING

### STRATEGY

In the face of COVID-19, for 2021 we will need to focus on welcoming visitors back to Greater Victoria, building consumer confidence and rebuilding demand by generating awareness of and aspiration to the destination.

### TACTICS

As we sort out the new post-pandemic industry dynamics, a need to increase awareness and interest in future years may mean consideration of incentive and loyalty tactics. Budget for paid marketing campaigns will be activated in the spring to drive the best return on investment for our partners and stakeholders. Our marketing activity will leverage in-house creative production and social media channels, using relevant assets that demonstrate Greater Victoria's welcoming and safe environment. Tactics include:

1. Grow yield
2. Rebuild demand
3. Optimize and refocus marketing investments to the areas of highest ROI and growth
4. Grow engagement and visits to Destination Greater Victoria website and social channels
5. Create adaptive, long-term solutions
6. Understand and employ existing and emerging trends

Driving awareness of the destination on an ongoing basis, marketing efforts will showcase evergreen destination experiences and products that result in bookings. The efforts will include dedicated campaign themes to address consumer confidence. We will continue to work with member partners to ensure content, offers and value-adds are current and consumer-centric.

Under ideal circumstances, we will utilize Destination Canada funding and restricted reserve funds to launch a Spring “bridge” campaign to restart business in Q1 and early Q2. Tactics may include an incentive, dining and romance focused marketing. Funds from Destination BC will be utilized.

A wider and larger Welcome Back campaign in Summer 2021 will focus primarily on Seattle, WA. Proposed budget will include use of restricted reserves.

## GEO-MARKETS

Until COVID-19 ebbs – either through medical progress or as people have the virus and much of the population develops immunity – we will focus on the primary market of Vancouver (lower mainland) with additional attention to Canadian markets like Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver Island. Subsequently, when appropriate, we will turn attention to past primary markets such as Seattle and San Francisco.

## TRAVEL MEDIA: IDENTIFYING AND PITCHING MEDIA OUTLETS, JOURNALISTS AND KEY INFLUENCERS

### STRATEGY

The Travel Media team will continue to focus on securing earned coverage on television, radio, print, online and social channels. Media and influencers identified were selected based on their demographics, engagement, previous visitation and overall relationship.

Travel Media will pitch relevant and timely themes that set Greater Victoria apart including wellness, food and drink, patios, exploring outdoors, and off the beaten path experiences. There will be increased emphasis on Greater Victoria as an inviting destination for visitors to explore and safely practice physical distancing.

Destination Greater Victoria will be proactive in pitching interesting and unique Greater Victoria stories to compel media to visit or leverage existing content for the destination. We will also encourage influencers to repurpose existing content and images taken during previous visitation.

In the traditional space of earned media, we will leverage the opportunities provided via Destination BC and Destination Canada in regional and international markets.

## FURTHERING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

### CANADIAN EXPERIENCES FUND – AGRITOURISM INITIATIVE

The Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF) supports communities across Canada as they create and enhance tourism products, facilities and experiences. Delivered through Canada’s regional development agencies, this two-year fund helps Canada’s tourism sector innovate and grow by providing targeted investments based on regional priorities:

Eligible CEF proponents could be non-profits, for-profit businesses, local governments, local development agencies, or other organizations provided they are in line with the relevant regional development agency’s contribution programs and related terms and conditions.

Through this program, Destination Greater Victoria applied for and successfully secured funding to celebrate and support a farm-to-table or agritourism initiative which links producers in Saanich and the Saanich Peninsula through to the mainstream visitor economy. Destination Greater Victoria will continue to work with partners on the Flavour Trails marketing campaign in year two. Product knowledge training for producers and operators interested in preparing their operation for the highly lucrative meetings, conference and incentive market took place in year one (2020) and is ready to action when meetings and incentive travel market return.

The Saanich Peninsula has incredible potential as a regional tourism destination and its restaurants, wineries and natural beauty make it a short and attractive daytrip for visitors staying in the downtown core. We look forward to building on the success of Flavour Trails in 2021.

### COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings industry suffered significant negative impacts when restrictions were placed on mass gatherings. As a result, the Business Events Victoria and Victoria Conference Centre team have focused their efforts on rebooking 2020 conferences to future years. This is an ongoing process with many meetings originally rebooked for 2021 shifting to 2022 and beyond as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. Looking ahead to 2021, BEV's strategies and tactics will constantly evolve as we navigate changes in the industry.

### STRATEGY

- Rebook conferences rescheduled due to COVID-19 and work with clients to maintain business on the books for future years.
- Build back meetings in our destination and regain consumer confidence by highlighting safety measures and venues to host meetings.
- Drive business for future years through marketing campaigns and booking initiatives.
- Engage with clients through various activities within key markets.
- Participate in advocacy work for the meetings industry through organizations such as Meetings Mean Business and the BC Meetings & Events Group.

### TACTICS

1. 2021 Group Booking Incentive – “We are here to support you!” – financial incentive to drive 2021 group business.
2. Build Back Meetings Campaign – focus on under 50p/virtual events in the new year, building back to larger events
3. Meetings Restart Campaign – revised “daffodil campaign” - send flower seeds and messaging to clients to remind them of blooming flowers in Greater Victoria and the new start and growth of business events.
4. Flavour Trail Program for the meetings market.
5. Cities in Sync – opportunities to leverage marketing dollars through continued partnership targeted at association market
6. In-Market Activities – when appropriate, will engage in various tradeshow and in-market sales activities in key markets
  - Potential Tradeshow – CMEE, CSAE, PCMA CIC
7. Fall Client FAM
8. Fall Customer Advisory Board Meeting – engaging this key group in rebuilding the Destination's Meetings Industry
9. Fall GM Missions (Ottawa/Toronto/Montreal)

# BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

## VISITOR SERVICES



### COVID-19

Contingent upon business activity, the Visitor Centre will reopen in Spring 2021. The plan is to open on weekends and build in line with the recovery of the Greater Victoria visitor economy.

### STRATEGY

Apply destination knowledge and outstanding customer service in interactions with visitors desiring information and booking services that help create an unforgettable travel experience. The goal through Visitor Services' visitor interactions is to extend lengths-of-stay and encourage repeat visitation. In connection with the Destination Greater Victoria's five-year strategy, this includes:

- Ticket sales for our members
- Grow rate and volume.
- Address seasonality.
- Maintain high rating in the membership survey: 2019 satisfaction was 60%

### RATIONALE

Visitor Services is a core function of a major destination marketing organization. The ability to handle customer enquiries, recommend and sell member products, extend lengths-of-stay, handle issues professionally and promote to other Destination B.C. network locations is central to the Visitor Services mandate.

### TACTICS

- Professional and continuous sales training for all front-line staff to ensure product is understood, adhere to sales targets and customer service initiatives and foster a strong growth mentality.
- Collaboration with members and potential partners.
- Leverage technologies to enhance digital offerings to visitors.
- Increase relevance of Visitor Centre to augment foot traffic.
- Enhancement of the volunteer program and elevating their presence to grow volunteer numbers, hours and impact.

### PARTNERSHIPS

Visitor Services partners with the City of Victoria, District of Saanich, Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, Destination British Columbia, Destination Canada, Downtown Victoria Business Association, Attractions Victoria, Les Clefs dor Canada and the Victoria Guest Services Network.

### FUNDING SOURCES

Destination Greater Victoria receives grants for Visitor Services from the City of Victoria and District of Saanich. These grants are augmented by membership revenues, incremental advertising opportunities and commissions on ticket sales from member products and services.



# BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

## TRAVEL TRADE

Travel Trade is the business sector of the visitor economy primarily focused on leisure travel, where people and companies re-sell travel products they have bought or reserved from other parties. The travel trade focus of a destination marketing organization is to ensure businesses from the destination are well represented and have good positioning on travel related “shelf space” in order to be visible and purchased by consumers.

2021 should be a different year for travel trade than in previous years. The focus will be to support travel trade offerings in Canadian markets as we await international markets reopening.

Destination Greater Victoria will stay in touch with international markets and continue to provide member product information, as well as continuing to share updates about health and safety protocols. We expect that as the year progresses and travel restrictions start to ease, business orientation will naturally revert to operators focused on international travellers. We will take the lead from senior levels of government and adjust our tactics accordingly.

## TACTICS

- For winter and spring 2021, continue to educate Canadian travel intermediaries that Greater Victoria is a winter destination.
- Continue our successful partnership with Air Canada and Air Canada Vacations promoting Greater Victoria.
- As tour operators pivot to offer domestic tour series in the short term, work on innovative ways to partner.
- Continually communicate product that is open along with safety protocols to Canadian travel agents.
- Remaining relevant with inbound tour operators, receptive tour operators and be ready to open in Q1 and Q2 2021.

## TRADESHOWS

Although the status of key travel trade-related tradeshow is uncertain at this time, as an organization we will be prepared to re-engage when it is safe to do so.

## BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

### GREATER VICTORIA SPORT TOURISM COMMISSION

The sports tourism business and the sports community was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to restrictions on travel, gatherings, and other societal priorities. The Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission had 12 events in business development or where there was a sponsorship relationship cancelled or postponed (list attached), as well as two other major events in the community affected.

Despite these setbacks, Destination Greater Victoria remains committed opportunities associated with sports tourism and values the Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission. It is believed when health regulations allow sports tourism will recover as sports organizations are keen to deliver on their core missions of competition and creating positive legacies for their sports and communities. There will be considerable pent-up demand and energy for sports tourism. While events may take some time to return to their pre-COVID-19 size, recovery will commence quickly.

The Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission with Keith Wells as the Executive Director is actively engaged with the British Columbia Sport Tourism Network and Sport Tourism Canada, helping inform the Provincial and Federal government on sports recovery recommendations. Information from these conversations is also communicated back to local sports stakeholders.

For 2021, the Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission will have three major focuses:

- Delivery of the BC 55+ Games, scheduled for September 2021.
- Rebooking or rescheduling events that were lost.
- Forward Looking Bids — Maintain professional capacity and prepare to bid on future sports tourism opportunities as they present themselves.

### DELIVERY OF THE BC 55+ GAMES

The BC 55+ Games Society is keen to work with The Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission to execute the 55+ BC Games. A strong Board of Directors is in place and work is well underway. These games typically have an economic impact of \$3.3 million (based on a 2017 Vernon 55+ BC Games economic impact study) in the communities they are held. In addition, these games will create organizing capacity for multi-sport events and support capacity-building for future events (e.g. Invictus Games).

### REBOOKING OR RESCHEDULING EVENTS THAT WERE LOST IN 2020

Like all areas in the visitor economy, rebooking and re-scheduling are watchwords. The Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission will continue to work with organizers to rebook where possible with appropriate sponsorship tied to business outcomes.

### FORWARD LOOKING BIDS

By maintaining the professional capacity in the Greater Victoria Sports Tourism Commission - supported by the shared services in Destination Greater Victoria - Greater Victoria is well positioned to respond to future bid opportunities as we move towards Phase 4 of the BC Restart Plan in 2021.

### **Sports Tourism Events Affected in 2020: (formal partnership with GVSTC)**

- Bear Mountain Bike Festival, March 28-29, 2020
- TC 10K, April 26, 2020
- HSBC Rugby Canada's Women's Sevens, May 2-3, 2020
- Bayview Place DC Bank Open, June 1-7, 2020

- Goddess Run, June 6, 2020
- FIBA Olympic Qualifying Basketball, June 23 – 28, 2020
- Three Tour Challenge, September 5-8, 2020
- Goodlife Fitness Marathon, October 11, 2020
- Victoria International NCAA Women’s Basketball, November 2020
- Bear Crossing Grand Prix/Canadian National Cyclocross Championships, November 13 – 15
- UVIC Alumni Boys Basketball Tournament, December 2020

**Other Major Sports Tourism Events Affected in 2020:**

- Canadian Little League Baseball Championship, August 4-16, 2020
- Canadian Francophone Games, August 14-18

*Special Note on the FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournament: There was significant excitement about Greater Victoria hosting the 2020 FIBA Olympic Qualifying tournament in 2020. Fortunately, that event has been rescheduled to June 29 to July 4, 2021, along with the WE THE WEST FEST celebration of basketball. We are hopeful that health restrictions will be easing by that time.*

## BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

### MAJOR EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

Destination Greater Victoria's focus for Major Events and Conferences is building and executing successful major events that drive room nights, with emphasis on the shoulder seasons and the off-peak season. The focus has been on repeatable events which add to the brand perception of Greater Victoria as a destination.

The Major Events and Conferences program was created in 2017 and started delivering major conferences in 2018. Over the past three years it built up capacity and was adding significant value. Regrettably, like all major conferences and events in 2020 this work was deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The BC Restart Plan specifically prohibits activities requiring large gatherings such as conventions, live audience professional sports and concerts along with international tourism until Phase 4, which is conditional on at least one of: wide vaccination, community immunity or broad successful treatments.

With these conditions in mind, the following are the provisional plans for Major Events and Conferences in 2021.

#### IMPACT SUSTAINABILITY TRAVEL & TOURISM CONFERENCE

This conference was executed in January 2018, January 2019 and January 2020. It had become a going concern, having sold out the capacity of the Victoria Conference Centre, attracted significant sponsorship and attained international brand reputation. It also helped attract other conferences to meet in Greater Victoria because of the "halo" associated with it. Destination Greater Victoria holds 25 per cent of the shares of the company and operates the conference in partnership with three other entities. In 2020, Destination Greater Victoria started to see return on initial seed capital for the event.

For 2021, the plan with IMPACT is to execute a modest virtual conference in the first week of February to keep the brand alive and create excitement for a reboot in January 2022. Partnerships and sponsorship are in development to defray the costs of production.

#### CAPITAL CITY COMIC CON

The Capital City Comicon was executed in March 2019 and March 2020. It was just over ten days away from being executed in March 2020 when the organizing committee took the prudent decision to postpone the event. The event is operated by a not-for-profit society, which includes Destination Greater Victoria, the Downtown Victoria Business Association, and the National Toy Museum. The event is tentatively planned for November 2021, subject to compliance with health orders. The Capital City Comic Con is a significant event with a larger economic impact but also has more risk. The organizing committee meets regularly and is preparing to execute the event in 2021. However, the organizers will be prudent and ensure it is safe to hold. One challenge to overcome is that the ticketing company previously partnering on the event has been negatively affected by the pandemic. We are working to secure deposit monies and consumer data.

#### DINE AROUND AND STAY IN TOWN

For many years, the Dine Around and Stay in Town festival was an important off-peak seasonal event to support our restaurant and hotel members. With both hotels and restaurants struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event in January 2021 will be more important than ever. Unfortunately, restrictions on gatherings mean the gala event will not take place in 2021.

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

There have been other opportunities identified such as a global garden festival and further research underway around taking more leadership with Deuce Days. Due to the uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic, these two opportunities will remain watching briefs as we focus first on recovery.

## CAPACITY

The dedicated capacity of the business unit was affected with budget constraints due to COVID-19 as well as the long-term restrictions on major conferences and events. Work related to these projects is now shared across the organization. We will assess needs as we recover.

# RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND GOVERNANCE

## STRATEGY

The focus of Destination Greater Victoria's research, evaluation and governance activities continues to be developing and implementing initiatives and processes to facilitate DGV's strategic direction and planning as well as effective organizational oversight and performance. These are particularly important within the context of uncertainties due to COVID-19 as well as the need to work purposively towards recovery. Destination Greater Victoria's research and evaluation activities aim to inform business development and provide members, partners and other stakeholders with industry information to support decision making. Destination Greater Victoria's governance activities are geared to supporting the Board of Directors and advisory Committees in representing members and partners, delivering strong governance, overseeing organizational performance and providing strategic input.

## TACTICS

Key activities and tactics for 2021 include:

- Disseminating information to support recovery from COVID impacts for members.
- Collating, analyzing and reporting tourism industry data from multiple sources to help inform Destination Greater Victoria's strategies and business unit activities, and to add value for members.
- Providing industry information and reports as resources for members, partners and stakeholders.
- Commencing work towards a nuanced understanding of visitor segmentation and source markets.
- Monitoring and evaluating Destination Greater Victoria's performance on key strategic measures using the Balanced Scorecard framework.
- Organizing an Annual General Meeting (AGM) for March 2021 to cover 2020 as well as 2021.
- Helping to ensure best practices in governance and providing access to governance resources; for example, through the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD).
- Providing support and tools for efficient Board and advisory Committee activities, including collating meetings packages, facilitating meetings, maintaining governance records as well as the Board and Committee Portal, and coordinating Board.

# MEMBER SERVICES

## STRATEGY

Destination Greater Victoria is a member-based organization comprising a diverse array of tourism and hospitality businesses. These businesses are not only the foundation of the organization but also drive Greater Victoria's visitor economy. When member businesses are operating fully, they bring considerable new incremental money into the economy, which provides jobs, tax contributions and further business opportunities along with a vibrant sustainable industry. In turn, Destination Greater Victoria provides a wide range of services and support for members. Member businesses have been impacted severely by the COVID-19 pandemic and it has been important that DGV provide as much support as possible. Part of this has been the Board-approved policy to extend memberships through to the end of 2021, effectively providing an additional year of membership benefits for one set of membership dues. DGV's work with the Greater Victoria Tourism Rescue & Recovery Task Force has also advocated for support for member businesses.

## TACTICS

Key activities and tactics for 2021 include:

- Providing ongoing value, support, benefits and services for Destination Greater Victoria's members.
- Continuing to recruit new members to the organization.
- Recommencing membership renewal processes for 2022 from October 2021.
- Introducing streamlined membership renewal processes, including online forms and payments.
- Developing an à la carte menu of membership options and enhancements.
- Incorporating required membership criteria into member recruitment and renewal processes.
- Aligning the membership cycle and membership processes for the Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission (GVSTC) with those for Destination Greater Victoria.

# 2021 ENTERPRISE BALANCED SCORECARD

Unit	2018 Result	2019 Result	2020 Target	2021 Target
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GREATER VICTORIA TOURISM INDUSTRY INDICATORS <sup>1</sup>					
Accommodation Occupancy Rate	%	76.43	73.52	73.50 <sup>2</sup>	49.00
Average Daily Room Rate	\$	184.20	189.10	175.00 <sup>2</sup>	155.00
RevPAR	\$	140.77	139.03	133.00 <sup>2</sup>	92.00
Conference Centre Delegate Days	#	121,430	118,661	120,000	50,000
YYJ Airport Arrivals	#	2,048,627	1,924,385	---	---

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE					
Marketing Campaign ROI	ratio	59:1	53:1	40:1	40:1
Business Events Confirmed Room Nights	#	34,184	37,951	35,000	15,000
Victoria Conference Centre Revenue	\$	1,508,427	1,350,171	1,300,000	500,000
Visitor Centre Ticket Sales	\$	1,994,912	1,753,500	2,000,000	600,000
Gross DGV Membership Services Revenue	\$	1,124,832	1,114,451	1,115,000	480,000
Gross GVSTC Membership Revenue	\$	---	82,250	100,000	0
Room Nights Attributable to Sport Tourism	#	---	16,486	10,000	7,000 <sup>3</sup>
Proportion of Gross Revenue Allocated to Labour	%	32.4	33.4	38.0	32.6 <sup>4</sup>

CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE					
Sessions on TourismVictoria.com Total Digital Platform	#	1,942,040	2,623,025	2,000,000	1,750,000
Travel Media & Influencer Placements	#	328	439	285 <sup>5</sup>	200
Incremental Overnight Tour Programs	#	37	35	25 <sup>6</sup>	5

INTERNAL PROCESS PERSPECTIVE					
Experiences Strategy	---				Fully Scoped
E-Commerce Audit	---				Complete
Cascading Balanced Scorecard	---	---	Incomplete	Roll Out	Complete
Diversity and Inclusion Audit	---				Complete



# 2021 ENTERPRISE BALANCED SCORECARD

	Unit	2018 Result	2019 Result	2020 Target	2021 Target
<b>LEARNING AND GROWTH PERSPECTIVE</b>					
Employee Engagement Composite Measure	%	68.6	71.4	71.0	65.0
Median Years of Employee Tenure	#	---	2.4	3.0	3.6
Employee Resilience Measure	---	---	---	---	Benchmark

<b>FOUNDATION</b>					
Member Satisfaction Rate (Satisfied or Neutral)	%	90	93	90	85
Board and Committee Meetings Participation	%	---	70	80	80
Local Media Placements	#	117	119	125	125
Political Briefings or Opportunities	#	55	49	55 <sup>7</sup>	60
Community Support for Tourism	---	98% Positive	Monitoring	Assess	98% Positive
DGV Environmental Carbon Offset and Reduction Plan	---	---	---	Measure	Reduce and regenerate

1 Source: Chemistry Consulting Group – Victoria Tourism Bulletins.

2 Source: Chemistry Consulting Group – Greater Victoria Occupancy, ARR and RevPAR Projections Report 2017.

3 Target reflects anticipated impact of the 55+ BC Games in 2021.

4 Based on release of Restricted Reserve funds during 2021. Otherwise, 39.0 per cent.

5 Target reflects one-time redirection of resources to GoMedia 2020.

6 Dependent on volatility of international markets.

7 Increase in target reflects COVID-19 media opportunities and higher profile through the Executive Director, Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission.

# GREATER VICTORIA VISITORS & CONVENTION BUREAU

## 2021 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Ordinary Income/Expense	BUDGET	FORECAST	BUDGET	Reference
	2020	2020	2021	
<b>Income</b>				
Total Commission Revenue	200,001	7,776	60,000	1
Total Destination Marketing Fee (DMF)	1,686,160	607,747	600,000	2
Total Grant Revenue	20,000	42,000	18,000	3
Total Hotel Tax Revenue	5,788,719	1,639,082	1,823,875	4
Total Membership Services	1,161,064	468,046	483,266	5
Total Miscellaneous Revenue	6,000	1,865,967	1,065,318	6
Total Retail Sales	58,400	6,397	18,274	7
Total Sports Tourism	75,000	18,560	0	8
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>8,995,344</b>	<b>4,655,575</b>	<b>4,068,733</b>	
Total COGS	50,807	5,303	15,897	
Gross Profit	8,944,537	4,650,272	4,052,836	
<b>Expense</b>				
<b>Marketing Expenses</b>				
Total Advertising	1,119,000	803,371	1,837,000	9a
Total Business Events Victoria	1,107,555	218,179	199,870	9b
Total General Marketing	74,500	9,023	7,946	9c
Total Major Events & Conferences	226,600	12,436	0	9d
Total Publications	206,000	209,970	9,300	9e
Total Research	188,016	52,527	17,776	9f
Total Corporate Communications	127,634	17,184	37,784	9g
Total Sports Tourism Commission	218,000	16,485	3,100	9h
Total Travel Media	277,343	7,183	24,000	9i
Total Travel Trade	208,500	(17,340)	75,000	9j
Total Website	217,800	122,578	165,636	9k
<b>Total Marketing Expenses</b>	<b>3,970,948</b>	<b>1,451,596</b>	<b>2,377,412</b>	
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
Amortization	95,000	81,512	74,000	10
Total Communications	93,457	80,022	50,191	11
Total Facilities Rent & Taxes	452,003	236,865	416,338	12
Total General Travel & Conferences	98,250	26,749	31,800	13
Total Grants & Sponsorships	98,500	96,620	95,000	14
Total Interest & Bank Charges	94,580	13,384	34,000	15
Total Membership Events	104,800	4,406	26,000	16
Total Operating Supplies	320,000	122,800	140,656	17
Total Professional Services	189,034	152,998	112,228	18
Total Utilities & Premises	63,700	10,790	11,864	19
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>1,609,324</b>	<b>826,146</b>	<b>992,077</b>	
Total Wages & Benefits	3,364,265	1,874,812	1,587,720	20
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>8,944,537</b>	<b>4,152,554</b>	<b>4,957,210</b>	
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>497,718</b>	<b>(904,374)</b>	21
Restricted Reserve - Deployed for Marketing			(800,000)	
<b>Net Income</b>			<b>(104,374)</b>	

NOTES

DESTINATION GREATER  
**VICTORIA** 